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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOVERNOR HOGAN PROCLAIMS MAY 1, 2020 MARYLAND SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY

Maryland Honors School Food Service Staff on Front Lines of COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency

BALTIMORE – (May 1, 2020) – Governor Larry Hogan proclaimed May 1 as Maryland School Lunch Hero Day, in tribute to the extraordinary efforts and service of community and school food service professionals on the frontlines of the COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency. Recognizing National School Lunch Hero Day in Maryland, Governor Hogan and State Schools Superintendent Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. joined local school systems in expressing their gratitude for the tireless dedication of the staff and volunteers who have served more than 6.4 million meals at nearly 700 sites throughout Maryland since schools were closed in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

“Child nutrition program staff have demonstrated steadfast commitment to provide nutritious meals for all children throughout the school year and are the unsung heroes of Maryland's COVID-19 pandemic response,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “Today, we are proud to recognize school and community nutrition professionals as part of National School Lunch Hero Day.”

The importance and nutritional value of school meals are well documented. For many children, school lunch is the most important and nutrient-rich meal of their day. The Maryland State Department of Education’s Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs provides Marylanders with a variety of nutrition program options for infants, preschoolers, school-aged children and certain adult groups as well.

“As incredible as our school nutrition employees are during the school-year balancing their many roles and following regulations to ensure safe and healthy meals, they have soared to an entirely new level in response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. “School Lunch Hero Day provides the opportunity for our State to thank these hardworking nutrition and wellness heroes.”

The United State Department of Agriculture funded child nutrition programs provide a critical safety net for millions of people in our State, in addition to meeting rigorous nutrition guidelines and standards. Participation in the nutrition programs support good health, development of life long healthy behaviors, promotion of academic achievement, nutrition education and promotion, and addresses food insecurity. For more information, please visit eatsmartmaryland.org

National School Lunch Hero day was designated by The School Nutrition Association and Jarrett Krosoczka, author of the “Lunch Lady” graphic novel series. School Lunch Hero Day provides an opportunity for parents, students, school staff and communities to thank those who provide healthy meals to nearly 30 million of

America's students each school day. Learn more about School Lunch Hero Day at www.schoollunchheroday.com.

View a [video tribute to Maryland's School Lunch Hero](#) team on MSDE's YouTube page.

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